WAYFARERS

VIRGINIA CORRY

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WAYFARERS

BY

VIRGINIA CORRY

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Fare you forth, my simple lays,
Knock at many a distant door
Until you find one who serves the poor;
To him you may speak
As he dreams by his hearthside,
Or wander with him in blossomtide.
So may a trusting piper find a friend
At the far world's end.

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THE PILGRIMS

The morn has come!
Fling wide your intangible gates, O day!
And we will go upon our way,
Some with hope;
Some with pain;
Some with love without a stain;
Some seeking to behold
Realms of purest gold;
And some who have lost their "Eldorádo,"
And now must pace with sorrow,
Who does not hesitate to trace
Pain upon the fairest face.

In the throng
I espy the gayest fellow,
Dressed in brightest yellow,
Dancing upon his way
In the radiant light of day.
Some call him levity;
Some call him laughter;
But him I will run after,
For I would be,
O sweetest destiny!
Mistress of this merry fellow
In a garb of brightest yellow.

THE SWINGERS

Green grow the grasses!
  Oh, green grow the grasses!
Over all the stars of light
  Watch while the world passes;
As a mote in a sunbeam,
  We swing in space.

Rulers of empires,
  Cobwebs of lace!
Don the plumes of an eagle,
  That ye may seem high
To the monarch of space
  Who dwells in the sky.

Green grow the grasses!
  Oh, green grow the grasses!
Weave me a swing of them, O Time!
  While the world passes;
And sway me and swing me,
  And toss me so high
That when my day passes
  I may alight in the sky.

THE MASTER'S POTTERY

The shadowy moonlight
  The glow of the morn,
The swaying heather,
  The flight of a bird in song,
A fragant flower,
  And the weed which we cast forth
      in scorn
Awaited the coming of man
  Ere ever man was born.

My Master took a bit of the sky
  A shadow near by,
A feather from the wing of a bird,
  And fleece from a cloud on high;
A breeze from the sea,
  A drooping flower,
A radiant hour,
  And snow and earth and sky
He folded up in thee and me
  And bade us seek Him in eternity.

UPON THE KING'S HIGHWAY

Drawn up in royal array
  Upon the king's highway
Are poppies buff and red;
  But the king lies abed.

The grasses are green,
  And bright with anemones;
Upon a great rock of gray
  Like a wan sentry
A butterfly, the emblem of fair weather,
  Spreads wings of black and yellow.

The maple trees form a grateful shade
  And an emerald arch
For a sovereign and his cavalcade;
  But naught comes their way,
Save a bit of thistledown, silent and free,
  Floating o'er the earth and the sea.

The king lies abed —
  And gentlemen of high degree
And equerries upon chargers bold
  With trappings of gold
Bow their heads;
  For none can summon the dead.

LONG AGO

THERE was a great señor
Who said my name, "Virginia,"
Softly and low,
Long ago.

His hand so brown
Did lead me down
A pathway oversteep
For my young feet.

There were thistles there
He did declare,
And a big snake
Over yonder.

So in play
We hastened away
From great heights
Grave and somber.

Some regret; some forget;
And some grow ever fonder
Of the years
Way over yonder.

I am not gray, but I must say
I am not so gay as upon that day,
In early May, when I said, "Nay,"
To the señor who said, "Virginia,"
Softly and low
Long ago.

A STUDENT TO AN INTRUDER

The rain beats upon my windowpane,
And the wind flings wide my door,
As though to explore my scanty store
And search my being o'er and o'er —
Doubtless shouting without what I am about,
Reading here of a shepherd and seer.
Wind, you may attest
That my clothes are not the best;
Nevertheless, proclaim
That I am a good fellow,
And, if my coins were yellow,
I would display great generosity
In clothing those
Who are obliged to bear you company,
And whose daily wage
Grim poverty cannot assuage.
Furthermore, you may affirm
That when I leave this world of little ease,
Should I live again
In a realm as vain,
I would prefer to be
A well covered tree, or a furry thing,
Indifferent to your sting —
For it is only in dreams
That I have the means
To keep want from my door

Or sufficiently cover my being o'er.
Therefore, wind so bold,
I pray you leave me alone
When I am at home.

TO THE RISING SUN

O Courier there!
  Bearest thou tidings of hope and good
    cheer
To a desolate being here?
  Is my name enrolled upon an ancient
    scroll?
Shall I live again beyond Life's plain?
  Thou that dwellest so high
Must know the secrets of the sky!

O mighty sun, whose glorious banner
  Is unfurled across the world,
Give me a light to decipher
  All that is symboled here aright!

THE MUSICIANS

Hark! hark! to the fairies' violins,
How they sing!
O'er their strings elfin fingers
Find their way and display
Modes of music seldom heard
In the world by passion stirred.
But the rills upon the hills
Have learned their trills;
And the nightingale delights to con the score
O'er and o'er,
Joined by the wood-dove's soft diminuendo;
And the breeze upon the river,
Murmuring of the earth's endeavor,
Hums the refrain
Again and again.
The bows are moved a trifle faster
On the strings which note disaster
As, reverberating and direct,
Sounds the mighty cataract!

Thus do the musicians play
In the garden of the day,
O men, halt upon your way,
And listen to the tune that Nature sings,
Voicing her delight
In the day and in the night!

BLUE AND RED

Blue and red for the dead!
The sunset unfolded its crimson flag on high,
  Studded with the blue of the sky;
Thus proclaiming that the day had passed by,
  And blue and red were for the dead.

  A lass I knew
Wore a gown of blue,
  A scarf of red
Draped her head;
  And she looked in vain
For a bark and her laddie
  Whom the sea had claimed;
Thus in blue and red
  She sighed for the dead.

IN THE VALLEY

Down in a misty valley
  I saw a form with little grace,
Which averted its face
  When I drew nigh;
And I heard a cry
  As I gazed into a pool near by,
And saw reflected there
  The ghost of a woman
I had once thought fair,
  With dusky tangled hair
And fixed wide eyes
  That seemed to gaze past me
Into some great depth of misery.

THE LADY IN GRAY

In the golden noonlight
  One with a marvelous sight
Saw a lady in gray
  Pass his way.
Her diaphanous hair hung way down
  Upon her gown,
Its meshes, frail
  As a silvery veil
Revealed her slender form
  Made of mist,
The hue of amethyst.

She lifted her arms, when Io!
  She floated to and fro,
And with a lingering sigh
  Passed the world by
And ascended a cloud
  Which, like a ship of state,
In a harbor of blue did her await;
  For it sailed away
And was lost to view
  Ere the sun sank to rest
Beyond the mountain's crest.

While in a castle square
  Mournfully a bell
Tolled a knell,
  And many uncovered their heads;
For it was said
  A gracious lady was dead.

NIGHT

A FRAGRANCE fills the air,
The moonlight makes the meadow fair,
And many a bright blossom I can see
Upon the hawthorn tree.
The radiant night
Hath all the charms of day;
Only in my desolate heart there dwells
The darkness of farewell.

IDOLATERS

Give me a sign
  Father of mine!
From a rift in heaven
  That we shall be forgiven!
We who are driven by chance
  And merciless circumstance
From love and pity,
  And in blindness fight our way
To an altar of clay.
  That we may erect on high
A god of gold
  To control the world;
While faith and just endeavor
  Are vanquished by this alien god forever,
And the race of men that Christ embraced
  Are deaf to His far cry,
As they proffer their souls
  To a god of gold.

LOVE

O LOVE, from the infinite regions above
Thou hast come,
With a radiance all thine own,
To lighten care
And bid the fallen yield not to despair.
Thy tender glance doth entrance;
Touch a silent chord within my heart
And I shall know what thou art,
Breath of morning! Star of night!
Weaver of a mystic rite!

Thou art Might, fair and wise,
For in thine eyes
None are too humble to share
Thy kingdom rare.
O minstrel of a hundred lays!
Make fair my days!
I know thou art a rover,
But I pray thee bide with me.
And for thy fee
Take thou my soul's ecstasy.

THE SPIRIT OF THE WIND

I STARTED from my sleep
  In the early morn to see
The spirit of the wind
  Who whispered o'er me;
White was the beard
  Which fell upon his breast.

Locks of gray
  Hung in disarray
About a rosy face
  To which youth had lent a grace
That Time could not erase.
  His eyes were blue of a faded hue.

Wide and without guile,
  Like the eyes of a questioning child,
They seemed to gaze beyond me
  Into depths of infinity.
In his face I could not trace
  The wisdom of our race.

As he whispered o'er me,
  I felt he had never known sorrow nor fear.
And I shuddered from his hand,
  For no mortal plea could he understand;
Created in a distant sphere,
  He knew naught of the suffering here.

Nature is his harp,
  And frequently upon the strings of destiny
He plays the wildest fantasy.
  The lilies bow their heads in fear
As this wandering minstrel draweth near,
  Singing the deathsong of the year.

The broken bow of the sycamore tree
  And the dying rose crumple 'neath his
      power.
The brave ship, with sails rent and riven,
  Will seek in vain a safe haven
When the wind upon the waters doth play
  Under heaven's vast canopy.

Therefore, although his breath
  But fanned my brow,
I shrank from him as a captive might
  The conqueror who, girth
With sword and spear,
  Bids the conquered have no fear.

TO THE SPARROWS AT DAYBREAK

Such a chatter!
  Such a chatter!
Goodness me, what's the matter?
  Has the magnolia burst into bloom?
Has the wisteria faded too soon?
  Has the field of clover
Been roughly ridden over?
  Has a falling chestnut burr
Caused a whirr
  Where the robin makes its nest
In a dim green wilderness?
  O good creatures, I would know
Why you chatter so.

Bumblebee and lazy beetle,
  Golden moth that plagues the people,
Do you know
  There is the deuce to pay
Among the heralds of the day?

THE DESERTERS

Ho, my lord!
  In the campfire's gleams
Your men at arms
  Make way for dreams
In which the enemy
  Scales your castle walls,
And sups with jest and revelry
  In your ancestral halls!

The standard of your race
  Is flung upon the ground;
Upon your battlements high
  They have set their ensign
With many colors bright;
  And God Himself
Must marvel at the sight!

  Awake! Arise!
Your men so brave and true
  Have forsaken you!

THE NIGHTINGALE

In the soft moonlight
That blooms in the night,
Like a magnolia fair
In its dark lair,
I listen to the tune
That the nightingale sings in June.

O sweetest lay!
O ecstasy!
O love from above!
Of this treasure beyond measure.
Dost thou sing,
O bird with the dusky wing!

THE WHITE BUTTERFLY

Little white butterfly
  Floating over my clover bed,
By what airy fancy are you led?
  Your wings have a soft sheen,
And your tender body between
  Must have a spark of celestial fire,
Or else it would tire
  Of hurrying to and fro
In a maze I cannot see
  In my purblind poverty;
But by your bearings
  I know you to be
A messenger of peace to me.

When Nature flaunts a flag of truce
  Naught can trouble me;
I may not have wings,
  But I understand a few things.

THE POMEGRANATE TREE

Although I have little to wear
And scanty fare,
I will not sigh
But sadness defy,
For a pomegranate tree
Is in blossom near me.

A bird in the tree
Carols with glee
Of fruit overhead,
Luscious and red,
To be borne by the pomegranate tree
In blossom near me.

Waving on high,
In the wan moonlight,
You may descry
Banners as bright as beacon lights
Upon the pomegranate tree
In blossom near me.

Hope and good cheer
Have settled here,
And the joyous hours
Are laden with flowers,
Since the pomegranate tree
Is in blossom near me.

A LOVER TO A LASS

Sweet Adair, lithesome and fair!
  Wilt thou be a wife to me?
My estate is not great,
  But rich beyond compare
Are the sweet alyssums there,
  And the purple heartsease grows
About the door
  Of the cottage which I have built with care,
Thinking, as I worked upon the hearth,
  Of thee, sweet Adair.

I shall not despair of thy presence there,
  For I have seen the sunrise
And the lovelight in thine eyes,
  Which glowed for me,
My divinity!
  I will give to thee a cloak of red,
And a bonny horse
  To carry thee through the valley,
And a flower bed
  Beneath thy window I will spread.

When thou dost dwell with me thou shalt see
  That my mother gave to me
The grace to know how tender I should be
  To a gentle being such as thee.
There is a hook for thy bonnet,
  A ribbon for thy hair, and a rocking chair

For thee, sweet Adair!
  And a faithful servitor thou shalt find,
When thou dost place thy hand in mine.

O sweet Adair!
  With thy pure eyes and sunny hair,
God give to me the right
  To do and dare for thee,
My sweet Adair!

SHADOWS

Near a thicket upon the ground
  Graceful shadows dance around,
Nod and gesture and display
  An exquisite courtesy;
Retreating with the breeze and giving way
  To the sunlight, whose shafts are found
Here and there upon the ground.

There, without strife or might, in a dim light,
Magic does abound;
  And not a sound
Breaks the spell in the fragrant dell
  Where fantastic shadows dwell.

If in despair, seek a sylvan glade,
  And watch the sunlight wade
  Through the shadows there;
  Soon your sorrows will disappear,
Leaving you without a fear.

LOVE'S FLOWER

Love, from the garden bring to me a flower,
As an emblem of this radiant hour;
Not the lily of the valley
Which droops its head as for one dead;
Nor the purple heliotrope
Which, when parted from its parent stem,
Dies so soon in the heat of noon;

Nor the daisy simple and white,
It cannot typify our delight;
Nor the gorgeous magnolia with its sweet perfume,
Its fair petals are stained
By the touch of a gentle hand;
Nor the flaming poppy
Which lifts its head so haughtily for all to see;

Nor the white rose
Which I wore in my hair
Before I knew thy love so true;
But see, heart of my heart,
By the aspen tree
Grows an everlasting blossom,
The flower for you and me.

Its straw colored petals do not deceive;
It is strong and true

And will live with us whate'er we do.
Place it upon my breast and it shall be
The emblem of the sweetest hour on earth to me,
The hour when you said your heart
Was mine for all time.

THE REAPERS

Yonder come the reapers
  The rising sun to greet,
The golden wheat to reap!
  Brilliant butterflies overhead;
Swaying poppies, yellow and red;
  Grasses green,
And grasses mellow,
  Hello!

With the songsters in the thickets
  Make obeisance to the day!
There is not a shadow in your way.
  Youth is sweet! Time is fleet!
And love is here to greet
  Every lad and lassie.
Tender messages are sent today
  From eyes of blue and brown and gray.

There's saucy Prue and Allan O'Toole;
  Mary Gould of the Golden Rule;
Annabel Gray in a kirtle gay;
  Gertie McGee and Johnnie Mallory;
Ebidiza and Ann Eliza;
  Freckled Fan and wayward Dan;
And leading the way,
  With hair astray, Madcap May.

She blithely dances o'er the dew,
  Gay as a bird,
Light as a fay,
  And the plague
Of the lads and lassies.
  Oh, life is but a holiday!
Work is play when love and youth combine
  In the fragrant summertime.

TIME

I CARE not for your laughter,
I care not for your tears,
I that am your master
And measure out your years.
To some I give full many,
To others but a span,
As I play pitch and toss
With the destiny of man.

I care no more if your life be brief
Than I do for the ruddy leaf
Which fades away too soon
'Neath October's loom.
For every grief there is relief,
But laughter is in vain,
For he who flaunts his mirth in such wise
Must buckle down to pain.

Will you fill your bowl, benighted soul,
And drain it with a sigh,
Or laugh as I pass by,
Placing within your reach
The walnut and the peach,
And in fairest faith the luscious grape,
To beguile you for awhile,
That you may gather a rose where the thistle grows?

Sweetest memories decline and fade away in time.
He who prates of glory
May be numbered with the slain;
He whose woes are many paradise may attain.
But I care not for your poverty,
I care not for your gain;
The master of your destiny
Does not reckon on the twain.

HER GUIDING LIGHT

Peter Bright! Peter Bright!
I think of thee
In the early morning light,
And when the lamp in my study
Throws its mellow beams
Upon the canvas where
The lorelei's slim white fingers stray
Through her golden hair.
And in the long dark night
Dreams recall thee to my sight,
For the memory of thee
Is my guiding light by day and night,
Peter Bright! Peter Bright!

Thy hands are kind and strong;
Thy words are wondrous wise;
And bright thine eyes.
When all the world seemed drear
Thou wert near with a guiding hand
And a soft command.
Laughter and many a jest
I found as thy guest,
And frequently thou gavest me
A tender glance
Which did my world enhance,
For thou wert mine only delight,
Peter Bright! Peter Bright!

Our paths diverge;
I must find courage
Where lurks despair,
For such would be thy counsel, dear,
And in all things I would be
True to thee.
The wood fire gleams,
But bleak and cold the study seems.
The lorelei's blue alluring eyes
Gaze upon me musingly;
A faint contempt upon her red lips
I discern as I sigh,
Peter Bright! Peter Bright!

SYMPATHY

Nature wore a somber air;
The brown hills were bare;
'Neath a leaden sky
A breeze did sigh,
And a woodpecker drummed disconsolately
Upon a hollow tree.
I could not see the trailing robe of day,
For a tint of gray,
Like the ashes of a dead flower,
Encompassed the hour
When love said good-by to me,
And nature wore a somber air
In my despair.

JUDGMENT

An adventurous bird
  Rose from the fields of earth
With a joyous song
  To seek the wells of spring;
But a bleak wind flung him
  Upon a rocky promontory
And broke his wing,
  Wherefore he could not sing,
Since only in flight
  Could he find delight,
And the strength to voice a song
  That did not to earth belong.
Fate had cast him upon the ground,
  And there he crept around
With a broken wing,
  A bit of struggling clay,
A grievous thing,
  Which the mole scorned to know.
Thus he dwelt
  With the lizard and the beetle
And the strangest kind of people.
  Ere long
Memory ceased to remind him
  Of the song of long ago,
And the lizard and the beetle,
  That had never known a woe,
Thought him slow.

THE DYING PLEA

Kiss me and tell me you love me.
Kiss me again!
I have passed through days of shadows,
And nights of pain.
Kiss me again!

Yon oak tree is sturdy,
But it bends
'Neath the sobbing rain.
Kiss me again!

See! The light is almost gone, and my white rose,
Ere it sheds its loveliness,
Taps upon my window pane.
Kiss me again!

Hark! There is a roar
As of a mighty ocean at my door!
And against the night
A wild bird screams with fright!
While I cry in vain
Kiss me again!

THE RETURNING

The dead have gone
So far, so far
Beyond the light of the evening star!
Although they live in a far country,
I am reminded of their constancy,
For oh! the dead remember me!

I have felt their presence in the gloom
Of my silent room,
Stepping softly to and fro,
Touching everything I possessed with a caress,
Seeming with their silent mien
Like creatures in a dream.

When the dawn's fresh face
Peered into my window and across my floor,
With unheard footsteps and mystic grace
They hovered around me, then vanished in space,
Leaving me forever more
Rarest treasures from hope's golden store.

L'ENVOI

Be it said of the dead
  That their tasks are over,
And place upon their breasts,
  As a symbol and a crest,
A four-leaf clover.

UNISON

The sky looked upon the earth and said:
"Although I be of high degree,
And thou so lowly,
We form a mighty unity;
Thou dost yield great treasure,
I form a pathway for the sun,
That its amber rays may bring thy conceptions
To infinite perfection.
And I send the rain to hasten the precious grain
Which doth millions sustain.
Thou seeketh my help in thy endeavor,
And I, who live forever,
Would be without thee but a vain concavity.
Look above and find a love
That covereth thee as a fruitful tree;
Thus proving that perfect harmony exists
Between those of high and low degree,
So ordained by a supreme authority."

A SONG OF SPRING

Rejoice! Rejoice!
As with one voice,
Rejoice!

The earth's decree
Appears on bush and tree.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

The breeze has sent fragrant petals
Here and there to declare that spring is here.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

O bird with the brightest wing,
With thee I lift my voice!
Rejoice! Rejoice!

The rose bough a dusky red doth hold
The acacia trees are decked with gold.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

O time so fleet,
Life is sweet!
Rejoice! Rejoice!

A harp with golden strings
Is touched by the breath of spring.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

Hark to the call of the whippoorwill
And the song of the rill!
Rejoice! Rejoice!

Welcome flowers and halcyon hours,
Ye doth proclaim a mighty name.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

King and beggar, take thy pleasure,
The bounty of earth is without measure.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

Upon the tree of destiny
Are goodly gifts for thee and me.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

As with one voice, rejoice!
For spring is here and God is near.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

THE REALM OF FANTASY

There was never a thorn for me, my dear,
  There was never a thorn for me;
I lived in a world of harmony,
  A world of harmony —

In a realm of ease where sapphire seas
  Reflected a sky serene;
And the hills were covered with a mellow
    bloom,
  And the meadows with a tender green.

The roses there could do no wrong,
  They had never a thorn, my dear,
For they lived in a world of harmony,
  A world of harmony.

If you would know of this mystic sphere
  Where the oriole held communion with me,
    a human,
Upon the pinions wide
  Of imagination you must ride

O'er a world of gray into a realm of fantasy,
  Where there was never a thorn for me, my
    dear,
In a mystical world of harmony,
  A world of harmony.

THE SONG OF THE LOVER

I WENT through a dusky wood
  Where gray shadows stood,
And many trees
  Joined arms on high
To keep my glances from the sky.
  My pathway of crimson and gold,
Which the leaves placed
  Fold upon fold,
Led to the sea,
  Where a ship awaited me
Bound for a far country.

And singing a blithesome air
  Of a maiden fair,
I took no thought
  Of figures in gray,
  Nor the darkness of the wood,
Where the green leaves
  Made a hood
To cover many a creeping thing
  Which menaced me
On my way to the sea
  And my fair ladye.
For love accompanied me,
  And I saw upon the brow of night
Only a gem of the fairest light.

THE ROCKER

Tall poplar trees all in a row
In my garden grow.
On a windy day they nod and say,
"Ho, ho!" to the breeze
Which rustles their leaves,
And rocks the bough
Where a drowsy bird rests upon her downy nest
In a leafy wilderness.
The breeze may sigh and to her cry,
"Come away, come away, and fly with me today,
O pretty thing!
It is time to attend to your marketing."

But under the eaves
Of the poplar leaves
It is a pleasure in gusty weather
To dream with closed eyes of southern skies,
Heedless of treasure
To be found upon the ground.
So, little one, rock and sway
While others say,
"Ho, ho!" to the windy day.

THE PLAINT OF THE LONELY KNIGHT

Sweet daffodils and murmuring rills!
Hath passed this way
Upon a white palfrey
The fairest sight in all the wide daylight?
A lady in a damask gown,
With yellow hair unbound,
And upon her head a hood of red
From which shone forth
A face pale as the magnolia frail,
And eyes the hue of the iris blossom;
And lips red as the flaming flower
Which blooms in the snow 'neath a northern sky.
Hath ye seen such a radiant being pass by?
O swaying daffodils and murmuring rills!
Ye can but sigh;
She passed by!
And I can know no rest,
For this great lady but yesterday
Stole from me, an humble knight,
The heart within my breast,
And all the world seems dark and gray
Since she passed my way.

THE WATCHERS

In a dream I saw many watch towers agleam;
In a purple dale, I was within hail,
Yet the watchers spake not, but gazed upon me
With some despair;
And sighing to behold their grief, I awoke
Where I, a weary traveler,
Had lain down to rest when the day was bright,
And lo! it was night,
With many stars agleam in the purple sky;
Musingly I watched a cloud sail by.

THE STORM

The storm god is here!
The plumes of the ocean
Are all in motion,
Tossing on high
'Neath a somber sky,
As the great waves rise to hail
The riotous gale
Which whistles an air wild and free
Gleaned in a strange countree!

The trees are bent,
The leaves are sent
Over field and meadow,
And waving heather;
The sturdy oak,
The lily frail,
And the sweet daffodil
Are bowed with woe
By the mighty foe
Who stamps about
In maddest glee
To see his subjects
Scurry and flee
From a legion of fears
That shout in their ears.

But there is strength
To be found
In a hole in the ground,
And many a squirrel
Seeks a haven of rest
'Neath the earth's warm breast,
And does not envy
The beings proud and free
Who claim to hold dominion
Over land and sea.
Such wealth as theirs
May lay them low,
Where even a field mouse would not go.
Thus many a small thing
Triumphs today
Over man in this wild fray.

SUMMER

Summer has come again!
Garlands without a stain
Weave I with hope again,
Roses of fairest mien
Entwined with brightest green,
To deck my brow —
Listening to love acclaim
Summer has come again!
For in this garden fair all things declare
Summer has come, summer has come.

Violets so sweet
And subjects so neat
Summer has summoned to scent the air
With perfume rare
And attest her loveliness,
Crying in every ear
Be of good cheer,
Summer has come, summer is here.

Drape and deck yourselves
In fairest array
For a holiday,
And be in tune
With lovely June,
Bidding good-day
To everyone, for
Summer has come, summer has come.

In the trees
  Beneath the leaves
Birds with folded wings
  Sing of joyous things.
Who could repine
  In this glad time,
While the bees hum
  Summer has come, summer has come?

TO THE MAN UPON THE MOUNTAIN

O MAN upon the mountain top!
I am too frail to climb the trail
Which leads to your splendor;
But when the cool rains of September
Have quenched the brown earth's thirst up there,
The wild rose and the violet will climb your stair,
And perchance speak of one who faltered on the way,
For I wore them in my hair
In the valley when you thought me fair,
And did speak confidently to me
Of the might and height and light of prayer.
I, that had known despair, did not forbear
To hope that I too might find a way
To him who lives upon the radiant heights so high
Beyond the sky.

Do not leave me here in pain! Come again!
Teach me to be brave
And my spirit save;
For I would owe you such a debt
I could ne'er forget.

SLEEP

THERE is a whisper o'er the land
  Which many heed but none understand,
A whisper of peace and of love
  Like a benediction from above
To the bending flowers in the dusky hours;
  The messenger of love is softly singing his
    lay
O'er the golden head and the gray.

Sleep, ye whose playtime has just begun,
  Sleep, ye whose race is almost run,
Sleep, ye who weep,
  Tomorrow ye may reap golden wheat.
Sleep, happy things with folded wings,
  God's messenger is here;
Know ye not fear.

A MINSTREL TO A DAY

Where hast thou gone,
Thou gladsome day,
With thy blossoms bright and gay?
Wert thou born to me for a space
And then to God in heaven,
And canst thou be forgiven?

O beautiful, merciless day!
Thou hast gone with all my gladness;
But thou canst not take away
The flower she gave me in my madness.

A MESSENGER

A BIRD whose like
  I had never seen in mountain or meadow
Flew to my casement;
  And although his wings were bright,
He sang not of delight,
  But wore a plaintive air,
And sang, methought, of something lost
      somewhere;
  Or was it but my own despair
That he did voice with such a wondrous art
  That methought my heart
Would break with pain,
  Listening to the plaintive strain?

O vagrant from a distant shore!
  Sing to me no more!
For my love lies dying,
  And all the world is sighing.

SUNSET

Sunset! — A flock of seagulls wend their way
  Above a golden spray.
Near the bay the bluebells swing and sway,
  As though tolling for the passing day
In whose fiery rays the breeze
  Tosses crimson and gold and russet leaves,
Which dance away to meet the twilight gray,
  Whose velvety pall soon will be thrown over
    all.

Sunset! — The light within my room recedes
  As though it sought in vain
For the fair head that did brighten the gloom
  Of the dark room,
And in the wan light
  A shadow of a cypress grave and tall
Falls upon my wall.

LOVE AND PAIN

I PLUCKED a poppy for my breast.
The warmth that my life blood shed
Upon its loveliness drooped its head,
And so it died there
Of loneliness and despair.
I should have known that it was too fair
and gay
To stay with one who lingered in the gloom,
Past earth's fairy loom,
Where all things blithe gather with delight
And from golden hours are woven flowers
Which in graceful array
Welcome the day.

O heralds so bright,
Give me of your light!
For I have paid a toll to earth
And would find a way
Out of the gloom to yesterday.

THE LAST DESCENDANT

O'er ocean and land I have roamed,
At last I have come to my home,
Barred the great door; and alone
The old ruin I would explore,
But a shadowy form in a cloak of gray
Greets me from the gloom of a distant room.
. . . . . .

Sovereign of an ancient race!
  Thou hast come to haunt this place.
I know thy step upon the stair,
  I gaze into the glass
And see thine image in me,
  I that must tax my wits to find a way
To live from day to day.

I bend the knee to chance and trickery,
  And smile upon a rogue that he may harbor me
On account of my goodly pedigree.
  Time, the tyrant, has found a way
To place a stain upon thy heraldry,
  And show to man that none so high
Who may not in the dust lie.

Thy castle on the hill
  Which overlooks the sea
Is the home of the bat and the owl,
  And the rats have gnawn a way

Through thy precious tapestry.
  They disappear as I draw near,
But I feel their eyes from unseen vantage
  Gaze at me expectantly.

Where I linger by the chilly hearthside,
  Watching the spider weave its web
O'er the helmet of the dead,
  While the wind wails at the casement
And seems to say,
  "Away! away! away!"

THE PEBBLE

I PICKED a pebble from the ground;
It did speak to me of the depth of the sea;
Of a mountain stream which passed
O'er its smooth expanse long ago;
Of the gold which the fragile fern doth hold,
And the lotus flower which decked Cleopatra's bower.

Small wandering stone, polished bright,
And white as the robe of Aphrodite!
In centuries to come will I be as fine as thee?

ENDEAVOR

O RADIANT moon!
  Would that I could place
Thy mellow rays within my loom,
  And the brightness of the noon,
And the violet's sweet perfume,
  And the dusky hue of night,
And the sunset's ruddy light,
  And the soft glow of the morn,
And the blue of skies serene,
  And the sheen upon the rill
As it wanders down the hill.
  All these treasures rare,
O world most fair!
  I would weave into my loom,
And not despair
  That even I might attain
Perfection with my hand and brain.

LIFE'S CASTAWAY

I AM too sad to pray;
The weather is bleak,
And many a harsh wind
Has withered my cheek;
My form is bent,
As though a harlequin,
With grim laughter, had sent
My lofty spirit
Into a grotesque tenement.

I would leap upon a charger bold
And dash into the fray,
Where virtue seeks to find a way
Past tyrants of renown
Who claim the day;
But I am old,
And although my spirit would command,
This poor clay will not obey.

The day haunts the night
With visions of delight,
Such as a castaway
Upon a desolate reef may recall
As the evening shadows fall,
And the seagulls
Flash in the ocean's bed,
And scream o'er his head.

The sunset has cast its rays upon my floor,
  And past my door a lonely loon flies
With a plaintive cry;
  The night is here to clothe me o'er with
    grace
In a mansion which is known as my home,
  Rich with treasures from oversea
Which mock me and declare
  That my kingdom is despair.

FROM OUT THE PAST

He stood in a pathway dim
  When the moon and I discovered him,
As I by my casement leant,
  And the moon upon its pathway went.
His helmet was under his arm
  And his fair hair caught the light,
Which seemed as bright
  As the chained armor of gold which did enfold
A form of slender grace with visage bold
  Which my very soul did entrance,
For the serene brow and sunny hair
  Memory claimed I had caressed somewhere;
As through labyrinths of time I seemed to climb
  Back to the far days
When I had known the bliss of his kiss.

O my brave knight!
  So pale in the wan light,
A sword reached your heart
  Ere my sire's minions tore us apart.
Many lives I have led, many tears I have shed
  Since last we lived and loved,
In a fair clime, in a distant time.

By a token all unspoken
I knew that he had come
Through the mazes of the ages
To claim the love so true and tender
That I to him did surrender
Long ago.
And with a cry of rapture which did attest
The love aglow within my breast,
I hastened to join him where
The white lilac blossoms decked the night
With fragrance and delight;
When from the ivy tower
A bell tolled the midnight hour,
And I awoke to darkness and despair,
For my lover was not there.

ONE OF MANY

From street to street
And house to house
He makes his way,
Offering for sale,
With a wistful face,
Pins and needles, thread and lace,
And with difficulty hoisting his pack
Upon his back,
For he is feeble, bent and gray,
The old Jew peddler who comes our way.

A stranger to ease and luxuries,
But who shall say
He is not a brave, good knight
In God's great company?
For his eyes are resolute and true,
And he takes his orders graciously
From destiny, murmuring not at his lot;
And I feel that I am in right good company
When he smilingly
Offers his wares to me.

Upon your doorstep look with care
For brave Endeavor may be lurking there;
A stranger of high degree,
Although he wear

A threadbare coat and an humble air,
He carries many a virtue
Which might lend a grace
To a haughty face,
For upon the road of pain
There is much to be gained.

THE MORNING BREEZE

Touched are the lute strings of morning
By a truant breeze from high,
Bidding the tall white roses nod
To the humbler daisies nigh;
Rousing a bee in the clover;
Ruffling a butterfly's wings;
Searching the earth over
For small invisible things;
Scattering from the trees their weak leaves
To form a stronghold for the beetle,
He who doubts not that such eaves
Will protect him from all thieves
Who would rob him of his rest
As he dreams on earth's warm breast.

Merry breeze so fond of plunder!
You have robbed me of my slumber,
Flapping my curtain to and fro,
Calling me to rise and go
Out where all things seem so gay
On this fair midsummer day.

HOSPITALITY

Beneath my roof
  There is a proof
Of my hospitality,
  Which the passer-by
May plainly see,
  Since the swallows have come
To dwell with me.
  With fluttering wings
The twittering things
  Have brought some clay
And molded a way,
  Under my roof to stay
In comfort and ease for many a day.

They occupy rooms of small dimensions,
  And to me pay no attention,
But seem inclined to do as they please
  Under my eaves.
I have not turned them out,
  For I find pleasure
In watching what they are about,
  Feeling quite proud
That creatures so happy and free
  Should care to dwell with me;
And devotedly say:
  "Blessed be the hollows
Of the swallows."

UPON THE SEASHORE

Since youth has passed my door, and will
speak to me no more,
I care not the world to explore.
I will wander upon my own seashore,
And watch the ships put out to sea,
Pondering upon what Fate may have in
store for me
In a strange country.

THE PLEA OF THE SCISSORS GRINDER

Scissors to grind, scissors to grind!
Who will be kind
And give to me their scissors to grind?
I ring my bell
To call you out (without a shout).
Scissors to grind, scissors to grind!

O you of good cheer!
There is someone here
Who may be in need;
Take heed, take heed,
And good will with necessity combine.
Scissors to grind, scissors to grind!

Some birds fly high,
And some fly low,
As o'er the earth they go.
Mortals up and mortals down,
Do not frown but bring to me, your
Scissors to grind, scissors to grind.

Do not doubt that justice you will find
As I grind;
See how sharp your scissors be,
A bit of leather
They will sever,
Scissors to grind, scissors to grind!

My bell is not set upon a steeple
Beneath a cross of gold
For the sun to behold,
But upon a little cart,
With the humble hope
That it will reach your heart.
O good people, be kind,
And give to me your
Scissors to grind, scissors to grind.

MOTHER EARTH

THERE is a great good mother
  Of high degree;
Although she lowly be,
  She hath a gracious air,
And she doth wear
  Red, emerald and gray,
And doth play
  A wondrous melody
Which echoes through the woods,
  And is found in many a rill
As it ripples in and out
  Among the hills.
She hath given me garments fair,
  Mellow wheat and berries sweet
When I would eat.
  I have bathed in a spring
Whose dusky rim
  She decked with brightest flowers
To make glad
  The fleeting hours.
When I did wander in the heat of noon.
  Upon the mountain side,
She gave me golden fruit
  To quench my thirst,
And the leafy shade
  Of a fragrant tree
To shelter me.
  And when night fell

I sought her ample breast
To drink of her fount of rest.

O mother of mine!
I feel that a Will divine
Hath fashioned thee
To comfort me,
And lead me away from sorrow,
And bid me raise my eyes
To a radiant tomorrow.

THE CONQUEROR

With my pack upon my back,
An old gray hat,
And a jacket out of gear —
You may think it queer —
But in garb such as this
I am bound for bliss.

As conqueror of the subjects of the sea
And lord of expectancy,
At break of day I search for prey
With the beetle and the bee
And all things which are free.
The bee knows the joy
Of seeking the pollen of the rose,
And the beetle, I suppose,
Looks for prey in quite another way,
But for sport he is bound without a sound;
While gleefully I sing a lay
Of an ancient day
When lions roamed this land so free
And disposed of men like me.
Now this is a legend gray
Relating to a bygone century.

My step is light,
But it rings with might

Upon the broad highway,
For I am bound for bliss,
And carking care I shall dismiss,
Since merry is the soul
That carries a fishing pole.

A LOVER AND — ALAS

You shall have a crown
  Of thistledown,
And a kingdom, too,
  For I love you.

See, your handmaidens so free
  Are growing at your knee;
Daisies white and small,
  And hyacinths, slender and tall.

The peacock and the crane
  By a royal decree here shall remain,
For the splendor of the peacock's train
  And the repose which the crane really
    knows.

A minstrel rare we cannot spare,
  So the breeze through the leaves
Shall whisper a lay
  All the livelong day.

And when night finds you here,
  Dewdrops like diamonds will appear
Upon your shoulders fair,
  And deck your hair.

That is, if you care to remain
And continue your reign
As queen of the meadow,
Subject to the damp in the heather.

I admit that a royal estate
Does not always compensate
For the loss of ease
To those accustomed to do as they please.

But if you should wander from here,
O my dear,
I trust you will not stay
At an expensive hostelry,

For I prefer to reside
Where you abide,
And like the hyacinths fair,
I have no money to spare.

Therefore, I beg, remain here
Through the warm season of the year,
And when evening summons you to rest
Place your head upon my breast.

And we as free
As the gypsies will be;
Your sighs I will temper
With my replies.

The dampness of the weather,
  Nor the small things in the heather
Cannot break up our home,
  Nor cause us to roam,

For our kingdom is here,
  And our hearts know no fear,
Since with love we abide
  Whatever betide.

DEGENERATION

Place a seashell to your ear,
A murmuring song you will hear,
Set as a scroll within the shell forever to dwell,
Telling of the mysteries of the deep,
Where curious creatures abound
And seaweed covers the retreat
Of the many that are weak;
Should they chance to stray along the sea's highway
Numbers would be slain,
For pirates lie in wait
The lives of the venturesome to take,
And by strength of might they achieve their fight.

There are many upon the earth
Who would emulate the subjects of the sea,
Truants from their natural sphere.
But in a future life
They may be found, floating around,
Looking for prey
In the same old way.
As you pluck the deadly hemlock
And the rose
For diverse destinies,
So will the Master of our fate
Separate the thistle from the grape.

LAUGHTER

THERE is laughter all about, shout!
And the sound
Will resound
All around
Or, say "Quail,"
And my dog will wag his tail.
Take not tears
From the years
With your fears!
Repent and pray
To be gay,
For the fun
Has just begun!

THE SIGN

One cloudy night upon the sky
I saw silvery sheaves of wheat stacked high
  Upon a stubble field;
At its extremity a shimmering waterfall,
  Beneath which a lake
Seemed to take its sheen
  From the moon's radiant beams,
Which flooded it o'er, and sought to explore
  A dusky cavern near by.
But a centure in gray barred the way,
  And I knew to my sorrow
  That it would rain on the morrow.

THE ITALIAN YOUTH

Beaming face, eyes so bright,
  Teeth of glistening white!
"Will I buy thy peaches today?"
  Oh what bloom they do wear!
Shall I not declare they are fine?
  Can I not see they are in their prime?
Oh joy be thine!
  They are mine!
And here is coin to buy thee wine.

The exchange is fair;
  But how shall I pay for thy smile so
    gay?
I cannot make a like return,
  For I was not born in Italy.
But I thank thee
  For thy grace and thy radiant face;
Thou blooming dust of earth,
  Sweet be thy destiny
As these peaches are to me.

HIS TREASURY

I was as a lost man in a dream,
Fondling her nut-brown hair, agleam
With glints of gold, upon her shoulders bare;
Her eyes of blue of the iris hue
I closed with a kiss or two,
Forgetting that I was of high degree,
As I stooped to a maid so lowly.

But I glanced about to see
If anyone was observing me,
And discovered on a fence near by
An old owl which blinked an eye
And seriously gazed at me;
I did not care for the creature's stare,
So my lips sought those of the maiden there,
And under the fragrant locust tree
I held the key to a wondrous treasury.

For the maiden I loved and she loved me,
Yet I sighed to think I was above one so fair,
And in order to comfort me
With a kiss or two
The little maid mounted her milking stool,
And thus became a lady of high degree.
So Fate arranged a match for me
Under the fragrant locust tree.

UPON THE GREAT HIGHWAY

Although I lack might,
  I will champion the right:
The right of the brave and the holy,
  The right of the weak and the lowly;
And will endeavor, if only for a day,
  To straighten the way
Of the fellow in gray
  Whose star has declined
And left him blind
  Upon the great highway.

The lads and the lassies
  And the kitten there
Under my chair
  Shall know no fear
When I draw near;
  For I cannot compete
With the strength of the weak,
  And God would not have it otherwise,
Since their weakness
  Leads us to sympathy and sacrifice.

Therefore, pity the fellow in gray;
  He is not strong,
So help him along
  The great highway.

MAY

Come, come away!
Led by a feather
All together,
We will be gay!

What of today?
You have work, you say?
Oh come away!
Come away!

Fie! in such weather
Would you prefer
Gold to heather?
Come away!

Leave your hive
And be alive
Just for today
Come away!

This is May,
And by such token
We should play.
Come away!

IN HARVEST TIME

There is tragedy here
  And many a fear,
For a vast machine
  Goes up and down
Above the dome
  Where the field mouse makes his home

In great distress at his helplessness
  He mounts his tower of grass,
And sees a hurricane of steel pass.
  Oh, the pity! Oh, the city!
Oh, the dust and chaff
  Which flies in many eyes!

The citizens of Pompeii doubtless did pray
  To a god of clay,
As the field mouse may be doing today
  To the man on the mower —
The sower of disaster,
  And of his fate the master.

Oh, the ruined marts!
  And the wildly beating hearts
Of the little things
  Which were wont to play
In a most peculiar way
  Without fear of a disastrous year.

Now harvest time is here,
And the giants of the ground
Have gathered round
To tear the golden towers down;
It is said to make bread
For the people overhead.

If a mouse should survive this affair,
He may relate in language sedate
The hurry, scurry and worry
Of one of his number,
Who informed them all of the fall
Of the golden wheat in their street.

To them this tale may be as dear
As to us the ride of Paul Revere.
You may think it queer,
But if I were a seer,
I would tell you what they said
When they fled.

POSSESSION

The day is mine!
The day is mine!
Come, share with me a gift divine!
Sovereign am I of hours of ease and ecstasies.
There is a green velvet carpet spread for me in the valley;
And a blue jay tells me there is a rill upon the hill
Where the heather is in bloom,
And the scarlet cardinal flower glorifies the hour.
The day is mine!
The day is mine!
Virginia creeper decks the wall; daffodils are growing tall;
The blushing Lady Washington is outdone by the rhododendron;
The grasshopper prates of it like a village gossip;
There is a downy moth, a yellow butterfly and a bumblebee,
But they do not disagree;
They would not bother to make war on one another.
The weeping willow tree is ashamed of a name
Which suggests unhappiness — O trailing columbine.
The day is mine!
The day is mine!

The mocking bird is whistling for me
And I have an invitation from the wild rose o'er
the way
Which climbed the hedge to say, "Good-day,
Wilt thou agree to join my company,
The squirrel, the bee, the oriole, and the old elm
tree?"
The forget-me-not has cast its lot
With the gaudy marigold,
Therefore may find a reason not all treason
For being blue — but I will not repine —
The day is mine!
The day is mine!
I shall hop along the way with my little friend
the wren,
But the thrush shall see
That I can almost fly if I try.
The brilliant poppies sway and would race with
the day,
And I will not say I am clay
When I would be a branch of holly
Or a lissome queen of folly,
For light as a blossom from a tree is the spirit
within me.
The day is mine!
The day is mine!
With its pomp of flowers and precious hours,
A caterpillar has crept upon my gown;
I shall not frown, he may wish to show me round.

Time register me, A Rover through the perfumed clover.
My pedigree will not compare with a DeClare's
But by right of birth upon the kingdom men call earth,
The day is mine!
The day is mine!

THANKSGIVING

Dear God, I thank Thee
For this fair estate
Wherein we stray.
I know it cannot compare
With the realm of our destiny —
For there is an ecstasy at times
Which penetrates the mind
Like a vapor from a wine
Brewed in fields divine,
And tells us there is no extent to time,
Nor joy, nor peace
Beyond our reach.

Therefore, great God on high,
I thank Thee for the blueness of the sky,
The rose of dawn,
The melody of song,
And the strength to see
Thy beacon light
In the darkest night.

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